




MICHIGAN HEALTH & HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

Advocating for hospitals and the patients they serve.

TO: Members of the House Transportation Committee

FROM: Brian Peters, Senior Vice President, Advocacy 

DATE: June 6, 2006

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 297 – Motorcycle Helmet Law Repeal

MHA Position: OPPOSE

The Michigan Health & Hospital Association strongly opposes Senate Bill 297, which would repeal Michigan's mandatory motorcycle helmet law for persons 21 years of age and older. If enacted, this legislation could result in increased insurance and Medicaid costs. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, **"Every single state that has repealed its helmet law has seen a significant increase in fatalities and serious injuries."**

In 2002 and 2004, the MHA opposed similar legislation due to the fact that crash helmets reduce risks. According to the National Department of Transportation, an unhelmeted motorcyclist is 40 percent more likely to need ambulance service, be admitted to a hospital as an inpatient, have higher hospital costs, need neurosurgery and intensive care, need rehabilitation, be permanently impaired, and need long-term care. And it should come as no surprise that the National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration reports that head injury is the leading cause of death in motorcycle crashes.

The MHA consistently supports public policy that promotes responsible behavior and improves the health status of Michigan residents. The mandatory helmet law like the mandatory seat belt law saves lives. **We urge you to oppose SB 297 and maintain the current mandatory helmet law.**

SPENCER JOHNSON, PRESIDENT

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